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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Cal Poly Guitar Ensemble To Bring 'Familiar Refrain'
To Patients at Atascadero State Hospital**

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- The Cal Poly Guitar Ensemble will play a recital for the patients at the Atascadero State Hospital May 17 as part of the hospital's music therapy activities.

The program is a continuation of one begun last year when the university's Guitar Ensemble and its director, Jesús Saiz-Huedo, gave two recitals at the hospital.

Karen Johnson, music therapist at Atascadero State Hospital, again invited Saiz-Huedo and the Cal Poly Guitar Ensemble to perform.

"At Atascadero State Hospital," Johnson said, "music is used to restore, maintain and improve mental health. Music is effective in therapy because it is able to reach any level of development, any culture, any age group, any mental or physical impairment -- and any behavior."

"Last year's concerts were a very positive and successful experience for all of us," Saiz-Huedo said. "To play our guitars with the purpose of helping people heal was something very different from just learning pieces in class. My students definitely realized that their daily practice and learning can be very useful to their communities and to society in general in many ways.

"It's an honor for us to have been invited again by Karen Johnson to continue participation in the ASH's music therapy program," Saiz-Huedo said. "From the enthusiastic response to our performances last year, we feel that the music therapy program is really having an impact on every patient at the hospital and is a very effective tool in helping cure their disorders. I really want my Cal Poly students to feel the rewards of experiences like this as often and regularly as possible."

For this year's recital, Saiz-Huedo and the Cal Poly Guitar Ensemble plan to perform a selection of pieces by Vivaldi, Teleman, Albeniz, Satie, Joplin, Piazzolla and others.

(NOTE TO EDITORS: The recital at Atascadero State Hospital is not open to the public, but members of the media are invited to attend. Contact ASH's Public Relations Officer Barrie Hafler at 468-2008 orbhafler@dmhash.state.ca.us to make arrangements.

The concert begins at 1:30 p.m. For more information, contact Jo Ann Lloyd at 756-1511 or jllloyd@calpoly.edu. For an electronic image of the Cal Poly Guitar Ensemble, contact Lloyd.)

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